



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

2007-2014 HOUSING ELEMENT



- Q:** *Does the state require local cities and towns to plan for additional housing?*
- A:** Yes. General plans are required to include Housing Elements that describe how land will be made available to accommodate projected growth. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) estimates growth in population and housing on a 7-8 year planning cycle, and assigns that projected growth to 18 regions throughout the state. Each region is represented by a Council of Governments (COG), which is assigned the responsibility for distributing this growth to the local governments within their region. Every city and county is obligated by state law to plan for its fair share of the region's housing needs, through a process known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation or RHNA.
- Q:** *What is ABAG?*
- A:** Established in 1961, the Association of Bay Area Governments (or ABAG) is the COG for the nine counties and 101 cities and towns within the San Francisco Bay Area region. In this capacity, ABAG is responsible for making long-term forecasts of population, housing, and employment for the region.
- Q:** *What is the "Regional Housing Needs Allocation" or RHNA?*
- A:** The Regional Housing Needs Allocation process requires that all cities and counties plan for their fair share of the regions housing needs. Every city and county in California is required to designate sites where a range of different housing types might locate in the future. Without membership in ABAG, these assignments would be made directly by the state.
- RHNA assignments are made about every seven or eight years in coordination with the California HCD process described previously. RHNA assignments are based upon a formula that factors in the size of the community, its potential for housing and job growth, infrastructure and environmental constraints, and availability of public transit. Each community's RHNA assignment is divided into four income categories (very low, low, moderate, and above moderate). The RHNA process does not establish rental rates or sales prices.
- Q:** *How does the RHNA process affect Danville?*
- A:** In 2007, the State of California identified a need for 214,500 additional housing units in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area between 2007-2014. Danville's RHNA assignment was to plan for 583 of these units, or about one-quarter of one percent of the region's total. This assignment includes 326 units that need to be accommodated on land zoned for multi-family housing.

Q: *What does Danville need to do in order to comply with this state mandate?*

A: The RHNA “assignment” does not require the Town to build any housing – it only requires that the Town have enough land designated to enable such development to occur under market driven conditions.

Danville already has enough vacant land zoned to meet its single family assignment. It has some land available to meet its multi-family assignment, and it can count second units (in-law units) to meet a portion of this assignment as well. However, there is still a shortfall of adequate sites. To close this shortfall, the Town needs to designate at least 9.6 more acres of land for multi-family development. Of this amount, 1.7 acres has to be zoned at densities of 20-25 units per acre and 7.9 acres has to be zoned at densities of 25-35 units per acre. The Draft 2030 Plan reviews a total of 14 different housing opportunity sites that will be considered to achieve a minimum of 9.6 additional acres.

Q: *How does Danville’s RHNA compare to other communities?*

A: Danville’s RHNA for 2007-2014 was much lower than that for nearby communities in the Tri-Valley area. Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, and San Ramon all have assignments of over 3,000 units each.

Q: *Is RHNA a new process?*

A: No. The RHNA process has been in effect since the early 1980s. Danville is currently in its fourth RHNA cycle. The current cycle goes from 2007-2014. The previous cycle was 1999-2006. The next cycle will be 2014-2022.